

Grieving, Therapy, Cinema and Kieslowski's *Trois Couleurs: Rouge* (Switzerland / Poland / France 1994)

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Cultural associations with the colour red are potent in the Western world. They include blood and intense passion, linking to injury and death on one wing of a diptych and to love and life on the other. These connections and others resonate through Kieslowski's *Red* as authentic indications of its themes. Yet in this setting the connotations of the colour are not exclusively traditional because the heroine, a model, will have her image displayed on a gigantic scarlet billboard to promote bubble gum.

Like *Blue* and *White*, *Red* commences with raw noise running behind the opening title card – in this case, the racket of drenching rain. That gives way, when a man calls an international number, to a collage of digital sounds woven into a myriad voices. The camera follows the imagined path of the phone signal (through a CGI montage of cables and exchange equipment) down across the seabed of the English Channel, out the other side and along wiring tunnels until – as the beep for an engaged number is heard – it encounters a flashing amber light on which the title *Rouge* is superimposed: communication foiled, at least for the moment.

The caller replaces the receiver and dials again. We cut to Auguste (Jean-Pierre Lorit) thinking he is the same guy, as he takes his dog for a morning walk. But this is neither the caller nor the intended recipient. When Auguste leaves his front door, the camera elevates past a corner shop across the road from his apartment and penetrates someone else's upstairs window. In this flat the phone rings until the answering machine cuts in; but at the last moment a young woman picks up. Michel, her lover, is calling Geneva from England and immediately asks why her phone was engaged earlier and whether she is alone. His confrontational jealousy exposes the insecurities that separation has provoked in him: yet when Valentine (Irène Jacob) tells him how she longs to be with him, he abruptly veers away from an exchange of emotion so that she retreats and chats about the weather.

Throughout the trilogy, when Kieslowski's characters make use of communications technologies the warmth of their personal connection is tested. In *Blue* Julie uses the telephone as a means of initiating loving intimacy with Olivier. Dominique, on the contrary, deploys her phone in *White* callously to humiliate her ex-husband Karol. In this opening sequence of *Red* the telephone's function in the characters' emotional lives remains uncertain. Will it bring them together, as an instrument of communication should, or does it emphasise their apartness? Michel is never less than tetchy; but Auguste is wholly devoted to Karin his lover (Frédérique Feder), whom we only know for a long time by her telephone identity 'Personal Weather Reports'.

Valentine goes to her window as Michel's call ends, and the framing invites us to see her neighbour and his dog returning home unnoticed by her. A moment later Auguste comes back down to the street alone and drives off in a scarlet jeep so bright that we cannot but have spotted it in the street earlier. Right from the start scarlet obtrudes in shot after shot – in the furnishing of apartments, passing cars, a shop awning, a jacket and a tablecloth. The most vibrant primary colour on screen (frequently in deep contrast with either white or near black tones), it functions differently for spectators and characters. For spectators, prompted by the film's title and the careful placing of red within both the frame and the shots' chromatic scale, it impacts as a summons to puzzle at its significance. Indeed, given that there are no denotative connections between the red objects mentioned, the implicit invitation is to look for what hides behind their colour. As in analysing *Blue*, it seems right for the spectator to respect intuition and respond to the archetypal energies conveyed by this colour. Red, then, frequently implicates the instinctual realm. The characters, however, do not experience these triggers in the same way. Red seems to have no greater (and no less) significance to them than to us when we are outside the cinema. For example, they respond automatically to traffic signals without needing to cogitate on their meaning. The one exception: the vast scarlet background to Valentine's image in the advertisement does catch their attention – and ours too. It leaves us wanting to understand why.

From the start, as Janina Falkowska notices, vertical and horizontal lines isolate the spaces within apartments and houses and divide the landscape of Geneva into fragments of a city. She observes that this framing of shots complements the fragmentary nature of the characters' lives and emotions (1999: 153). Editing adds to the effect. The culmination of *Red*, in bringing together the protagonists from all three films demonstrates that it is not so

much their lives that are fragmented as the opportunities we have for looking in on them – just as in the cinema, so too in contemporary city life.

Fitting this aesthetic, Valentine (a professional model) is seen in disjointed moments of a long, tough day. First, a photographer, Jacques (Samuel Lebihan) stands her in front of a scarlet backdrop and, to get the shot he wants, urges her to express sadness by thinking of the most terrible thing she can.<sup>1</sup> As we are to see much later, the resultant image synchronistically anticipates the transforming terror she will experience at the film's conclusion. In a ballet studio during the afternoon, she works her body up to the threshold of pain, benefiting from the discipline that the regime imposes on her. Then evening brings the rapid-change routines of a glittering fashion show. Yet although the audience sees only fragments of these activities, the takes are long, fluid and lit to emphasise the beauty of the young woman's face. Kieslowski establishes much more than the way Valentine earns a living. Unlike the two films that precede it, *Red* does not open on a grieving character. Even when the exercises cause her pain, or she stumbles on the catwalk, Valentine radiates joyous expectancy in her young life. When first encountering the character we might think this an untested delight, but we later discover that although she is the bearer of painful family problems, she does not allow herself to succumb to sorrow. However, she has not yet integrated her own shadow (a prerequisite for a really intimate encounter with another) and this helps account for her still being alone.

When late that night she drives home through quiet city streets, scarlet lights glaze the screen oppressively. Traffic lights flare across her windscreen while the stoplights on a motorcycle and the frame of the vast but empty advertising hoarding catch at her eye. It hardly seems an accident (although it is obviously an irony) that this crossroads (so complex in both its topography and the protagonists' lives, and which will soon be dominated by a vast advert for bubble gum – an image for vacant inflation if ever there was one) is the Place des Philosophes. Pulling away from the lights, Valentine does not notice Auguste crossing on foot behind her. He drops his books in the road and discovers that by chance one has opened at a passage which grabs his eye. Meanwhile Valentine's attention is distracted by what she takes to be a malfunction in the car radio. As she tries to retune it, the car hits something she has not noticed – a large Alsatian bitch. When something strikes us

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<sup>1</sup> The scene pays homage to David Hemmings's calculating photographer in Antonioni's *Blow Up*.

unexpectedly out of left field, as in these accidents, the unconscious has created a moment of synchronistic crisis, a moment in time where there is a meaningful connection between the internal and external life. And so it proves for Auguste and Valentine.

There is in this sequence a rich conjunction of instances of noticing, not noticing and blind chance which will radically change the life of both Valentine and Auguste. Her depth of being shows at once. She stops, soothes the injured dog and lifts it with difficulty into the car. The brown tones and deep shadows of the city streets now predominate, except for the animal's blood on Valentine's fingers, as she searches her street map for the address on its tag. Far from the glamorous scarlet to which we have become accustomed, the blood has a rusted, smeary look. Her searching for direction is analogous to the stirring of the individuation process, as she seeks a first indication of where she must go. In the crisis, as she leaves the neon-bright city centre behind, the drabness of the night prepares the spectator for the ill-lit house that she approaches.

No one answers the knock of the nervous young woman in the shadows by the open door. We cut to a shot which tracks uncertainly through gloomy corridors as she tries to find her way in. Once again the takes are long, but the *mise-en scène* remains tightly restricted so that we cannot make out much more than that she is in a Victorian house. At last she comes to a living room. An elderly man (Jean-Louis Trintignant) sits in front of a console, unaware of her intrusion. Despite the seeming blankness of the encounter, something links them. A whine like a radio receiver searching for a signal hangs in the air, as if trying to find a connection – the very sound that distracted Valentine before her car struck the old man's dog.

All that she makes out during this first meeting is the old man's bitter indifference to the dog's fate. Appalled but not intimidated, she asks whether his reaction would be the same if she had run over his daughter. The misanthrope merely ripostes that he has no daughter and insists that Valentine leave. The scene is not as simple as this brief exchange suggests, however. Although the old man's words are rebarbative and direct, his gestures seem hesitant. For her part, Valentine's unexpected reference to a daughter unconsciously positions her in relation to him. Meanwhile his parting cry, '*Don't* shut the door!' (contrary to what most crusty ancients demand) is like an unconscious admission on his part that he does not altogether want to close her or Rita the bitch out. Both possess a libidinal energy

that he badly needs. Valentine slams the door defiantly, which brings the old man to his window. They gaze at each other, drawn (despite their hostility) by archetypal traits in the other to which they need to connect. They are *senex* and *anima* and, as we shall see, each supplies a necessary compensation to the other's dominant mind-set – standing as they do at the polar opposites of spirit and instinct.

Valentine drives Rita to a vet and then takes her home when the wound has been sutured. Undeterred by discovering that the dog is pregnant, she accepts with love the creature that blind chance has delivered to her. Then time shifts back into the earlier highly fragmented mode. She receives another jealous phone call from Michel. Her car alarm interrupts. She returns to the studio to see transparencies from the shoot, and learns that the legend to accompany her image in the bubble gum advert is 'Fraîcheur de vivre'. Jacques, the photographer wants to make love to her, but she deflects him gently, thinking of Michel. She buys a newspaper at her local café and wins money on a slot machine. She and the owner agree that in gambling bad luck is good (a notion that will resonate with the outturn of the ferry disaster that concludes the film). Conversely, good luck connotes misfortune. This seemingly bizarre reversal of the norm actually provides a good example of holding the tension between opposites and recognising intuitively that there is always another side to every circumstance. The rounded individual learns to circumambulate (or look at all sides of) a situation and to stay away from the ills of one-sidedness. The necessity of such a circumambulation of the facts immediately confronts Valentine when she opens the local paper. It carries a front-page shot of her brother fronting a headline story about drug users. Soon after, a neighbour brings money to her apartment that has been left for her anonymously. Troubled, she tries to reach her brother by phone. Time expands again.

Walking the restored Rita through a park, she lets the dog off the leash and it dashes into a church, skitters across its echoing marble floor, runs out and disappears completely. The empty church, home of a *deus absconditus* – a missing god – contains only a priest who has nothing to say in response to Valentine's plea for help. But Rita has followed her instinct and run home (perhaps a hint that ultimately help lies within in the self – the psyche's home). Valentine instinctively pursues the animal, which brings her back to the old man's house where late autumn's dead leaves crepitate across the gravelled yard as she approaches the gate. Sure enough, when she rings the bell Rita comes out followed by the old man. Although the bitch has found her own way home and obviously loves her sour master, the

animal holds the tension between the two of them in this awkward relationship, with Valentine embodying instinct and the old man personifying damaged spirit. Rita turns her head toward one and then the other.

The old man again offers Rita to Valentine, no longer wanting the animal or indeed anything. When Valentine suggests that he might as well stop breathing, he applauds the sentiment. Nevertheless, she establishes that it was he who sent money to her flat. Having secretly discovered where she lives, he appears to want to gain psychological control over her while remaining legally in the clear – hence he sent much more cash than she needed to pay the vet's bill. It is an over-compensation that brings to mind Jung's dictum that the opposite of power is not powerlessness but relationship. For Valentine, her yearning for relationship always matters more than power and she gives him back the wad.

The old man goes indoors to fetch change, leaving Valentine in the yard. She wanders around and then, unable to raise a response from the disconcerting hermit, enters his house. Once more she makes her way nervously through its gloomy spaces, an area of unconsciousness scarcely better lit than on her first visit. Indeed, all the scenes in this house take on a Vermeer-like chiaroscuro in which the protagonists' faces momentarily surface in murky pools of light before sinking back into the dark. Once again Valentine finds the radio console functioning. But this time, mixed through the tuning signal come the voices of two men, clandestine lovers, sharing a snatched conversation, one begging for an early meeting, the other struggling to ensure that his family know nothing of his second life.

The old man is watching her unobserved. He draws attention to himself and, challenged by a shocked Valentine, admits that he spies on his neighbours. His illegal use of communications technology to eavesdrop emphasises not his closeness but apartness from other people, not only socially but also emotionally and spiritually. He is repellent, but also pathetic. Although he complains when she cuts the signal that the lovers' suffering was just getting interesting, we can deduce (since he has taken no precautions to ensure that his unpleasant obsession remains concealed) that somewhere on the fringes where consciousness verges into the mind's darkness he wants to be found out. Indeed, he challenges Valentine to inform on him to the neighbour. His nervy decisiveness and startling gestures disconcert the young woman, as does his penetrating anticipation of her

moral revulsion; but the fact that he has foreseen her reaction fails to shake her certainty that she must stop his sinister intrusion on his neighbours' privacy.

She crosses the road to the suburban villa that he points out. A pleasant woman opens the door and asks her to wait until she calls her husband; but as she stands in the hallway, Valentine notices the daughter eavesdropping on her father via a telephone extension. Horrified by what she knows the girl must be hearing, Valentine mumbles an excuse and leaves.

As she returns across the street, the camera frames the scarlet jeep. Auguste has brought his weather-reporting girlfriend home. The blind, chance intersection of times and lives, though still unobserved by the characters, is becoming more insistent. Valentine's focus, of course, is elsewhere. She charges back under the old man's dispassionate gaze into his house. Leaves reflected in the window make his unshaven face appear yet more haggard and severe. The two protagonists prowl uncertainly around each other in the gloomy house, their reflections caught in various mirrors that make it difficult for the viewer to co-ordinate their movements. Valentine admits that she has been unable to intervene with the neighbour, but asks the old man to desist from spying. Her request deepens the conflict between them and, in the long scene that follows, their faces are for the most part deeply shadowed, with seldom more than one half of each countenance lit dimly.

Coldly, the old man tells Valentine that all his working life as a Judge he spied on people (surely a unique description of the judicial role). He has no idea whether he acted for good or bad.<sup>2</sup> This is a profound statement by the old man, realising post-career that he had passed verdicts based in his own subjective state of mind at the time. Those judgements had life-changing consequences for those whom he judged. Yet judgement is connected to narcissism in that people usually judge events in their own lives as good or bad. They do so as if definitively, rather than realise that their 'judgement' merely reflects a certain consciousness (personal or collective) which might be assigned meaning at a later time through a process of introspection that would further their own development.

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<sup>2</sup> Judge Kern is professional kin to the Parisian justice who presided over Karol and Dominique's divorce in *White*, focussing on legal niceties rather than the parties' wellbeing.

This Judge personifies the *senex*, an archetypal figure whose negative aspects stand in opposition to the wise old man. His conservative and authoritarian mental set; his detached assessment of his fellow beings; his melancholic humour and denial of imagination all confirm the attribution of type (see Samuels *et al.*, 1986: 137). No less than his contempt for others, he loathes and deliberately humiliates himself. When Valentine refuses his offer of tea and asks him to stop spying, he pours boiling water on the floor as if he were pissing rather than tipping a kettle. As a voyeur who subconsciously yearns for intimacy, rage boils behind his detached persona. Compounding offence, he invites her to flick his braces against his chest, an ugly mock offer of assisted self-flagellation. Such distasteful behaviour conforms to the *senex* type which Jung found sometimes associated with the sewer (1948a: 220).

Among the gods, the *senex* is Saturn. Associated with the deepest of depressions, he represents the terrifying aspect of the old man in front of whom youth is helpless despite being relentlessly driven by him. As Kronos, he castrated his father and severed the point of contact between male and female (Chetwynd, 1993: 349). This we shall discover holds true (at least at first sight) of Judge Kern, whose responsibility now must be to repair the loss. That will not be an easy task since his career-long exposure in court to endless malfeasance, brutality and evil has left him, like the god, cynical and despondent about human nature. The Judge's professional experiences have equipped him to predict the worst of people and, as he demonstrates to Valentine, he is all too often right. This comes home to her when he divines the roots of the sorrow he has caused her through his relentlessly pessimistic view of the human condition, and locates them in her own family. Yet she has the courage to admit that the source of her pain is her brother's discovery aged fifteen that he was not his father's son and the teenager's subsequent addiction to heroin. In thus laying herself open, Valentine mirrors the Judge's self-exposure: filaments of trust begin to form between them.

Just as Saturn's day heralds Sun-day (Jung, 1948a: 249-50), new light will eventually spring from the torpid figure of the Judge. The depressive nadir of life, as Chetwynd notes, ultimately liberates that which is essential from the dross, affording the chance of transformation (1993: 349). Then, positive *senex* features (which include balance, generosity towards others, wisdom and far-sightedness) may be integrated.

Suddenly the old man asks the girl to pause for a moment. Late autumn light brightens the gloomy interior of his house and Piotr Sobocinski's cinematography accentuates the change. Silvery notes overlay what could be the sound of a distant lighthouse while, as the rays of the setting sun flow under the eaves, the roof appears to journey across space. The combined effect is magical. Seeming to anticipate a shift in the planets' order, it prefigures just such an alteration in the interpersonal sphere. The enantiodromia of darkness into light anticipates the reversal of personality. But the moment does not last long, and soon the faces of the two characters (as they regress, resuming their familiar, opposed personae) are again bisected by dim light striving against deep shadow. The brief episode can be compared with the moment in *Blue* when Julie sinks underwater in the swimming pool – regression in the service of further integration.

Actually the illusory foghorn announces another phone call coming through Kern's eavesdropping system. A woman contacts Personal Weather Reports and inquires about the forecast to cover a long journey south. This conversation, very different from that of the anguished gay lovers, radiates mutual respect and kindness between caller and service provider. Two women who do not know each other are nonetheless connected by the telephone. Valentine is enchanted and, equally to the point, drawn into auditing the parade of unseen characters as surely as if she had been watching them pass by on the street. When a second call comes through, Kern announces before the caller speaks that it will be the weather reporter's lover. Valentine is hooked: although she eventually does cover her ears, she delays until she has overheard the young man expressing his wonderment at the previous night's lovemaking. The extent of the change that has come over her becomes plain when the Judge points to another neighbour strolling in his garden using a mobile. Kern alleges he is Geneva's biggest dealer in heroin, untouchable because the police can get no evidence against him. Valentine promptly asks for his number and, driven by the suffering the drug is causing her family, calls the dealer and tells him that he deserves to die. The man runs into his house, afraid.

What has got into Valentine? Her sudden rage has hitherto been a disavowed part of her self that resides in her shadow. Her action disgusts her; yet when the next call comes in just as she is leaving the Judge, she stops and listens without hesitation, desolated by an elderly woman's bitter complaints that her daughter neither visits nor shops for her. Kern turns the moral and intellectual screws on Valentine by suggesting she do the old woman's shopping

to ease her own feelings; then traps her into admitting that she rescued Rita because she would have felt guilty had she left the dog injured on the road. The Judge has tapped into Valentine's unconscious, pressing her to face the complexities of reality. But although guilt was an element that motivated her, the judge misses noticing that it was not the main driver moving her to rescue the dog. That arose from her developed sense of owning and taking responsibility for her own unconsciousness: the accident occurred when she was distracted from driving by correcting the tuning of her radio. Thus rescuing and taking responsibility for the dog anticipates her rescuing herself and eventually the judge.

When she drives back to the city, Valentine weeps – perhaps for loss of her innocence; perhaps because she sees how easily she has been drawn into the Judge's voyeuristic web; perhaps out of pity for the Judge himself, so skilled at seeing the worst in humanity, so blind to the complex motivations behind the actions of most people that lead them to mix good and bad purposes. Whatever else may have caused her tears, the feelings of powerlessness that triggered her shadow rage are key: she must give up the fantasy (which Judge Kern has sardonically proposed) that she is responsible for other people's misfortune. Omnipotent fantasies like those of saving her brother have trapped her. Now she must learn to live with her own survivor's guilt – *that* will be her responsibility, to save her soul and thus her self.

The pain Valentine is holding over her brother and the dynamics of her original family are also reflected in her present relationship with Michel. To this extent the judge was not lacking in psychological insight. Michael Friedman (1985) recognised a pivotal role played by guilt in arguing that individuals are hard wired to be concerned about other people altruistically, to a much greater degree than is commonly understood. Survivor guilt, according to research conducted by O'Connor, Berry, *et al.* (2000), encompasses guilt about feeling better off than others, or about any sort of advantage a person may think they have when compared to others. They propose that survivor guilt has been selected by evolution as a psychological mechanism supporting group living. In addition, according to the Control-Mastery perspective, survivor guilt, although indeed altruistically evolved, has links with submissive behaviour and may extend to causing depression and the individual's failure to progress toward his or her own goals. The motive thought to be responsible is concern about harming others by outdoing them (Clinical Update, 2005: 8). All of this speaks volumes about Valentine's suffering.

Valentine is not alone in being disturbed by the clash with the Judge. Just as Saturn is identical with the negative aspects of Mercurius, Kern also has a Mercurial temperament that undergoes swift change. It seems that these bruising encounters have sprung enantiodromia in him too: he sets about writing letters confessing his illicit spying to his neighbours and the police. A kind of painful enchantment is occurring with each character taking on some of the qualities of the other in compensation for their own lacks.

Hitherto our analysis has accepted, without unduly pressurising the evidence, that the story's coincidences have simply been a matter of the kind of chance on which many scriptwriters and novelists depend for their well-rounded plots. Indeed, other coincidences of that type occur when Valentine gets home, still distressed by her clash with Kern. She phones her brother, but he cuts conversation to the bone. Needing comfort, she no sooner murmurs her yearning for a call from her boyfriend, than the phone rings. However, it is not Michel but Jacques and she accepts his invitation to go bowling. Unknown to her (her ears having been covered at that moment), Karin the weather reporter has persuaded Auguste to go bowling too. But when the camera tracks across the lanes from Jacques's party and we expect to find this couple, it halts not on them but a table with a shattered beer glass – a mute augury of Auguste's soon-to-be broken heart.

In addition to the unnoticed coincidences which happen in everyone's life, considerable evidence is mounting up that phenomena of another, energy-charged kind are occurring. When Karin tossed a coin at her end of the phone line to decide how she and her lover should pass the evening, Kern flipped his own money – and it too came up tails. At one level this incident is undoubtedly an example of blind chance, since neither party could have influenced the fall of the other's coin. However, although we do not yet know what its meaning might be, it impresses us as having significance because we see how Kern's coin has landed before Karin reveals how hers has fallen. Remember too that the Judge knew who was calling before Auguste spoke. Both incidents furnish early signs of a phenomenon that will recur.

Jung called this phenomenon synchronicity. He used the term to refer to 'an acausal connection, through meaning, of inner psychological states (such as dreams, fantasies, or feelings) with events in the outer or material world' (Mansfield, 2002: 122). Roderick Main

points out that although Jung's formal definition did not extend to cover sets of events either solely between two inner psychic states or solely between two outer physical events, he nonetheless applied the term to them also (2004: 40). The extension of Jung's definition in this way permits the term synchronicity to be used in connection with events in *Red* where, for example, one character has prescient knowledge of the likely behaviour of another. Jung described as characteristic of synchronistic events that they 'cannot be considered from the point of view of causality, for causality presupposes the existence of space and time in so far as all observations are ultimately based upon bodies in motion' (Jung, 1952: 434). Synchronistic events are neither linked in time (witness Kern's foreknowledge noted above) nor in space (such events occur where no physical or material connection exists between them) (*Ibid.*: 433-4). As Victor Mansfield says, the inner state neither causes the outer event nor vice versa (2002: 123).

It is important to understand with Mansfield that no transcendent principle, whether god, angel or archetype, acts as the cause for synchronicity. We cannot attribute what happens in the empirical realm to what goes on in the transcendent realm (*Ibid.*). This specifically applies to the collective unconscious which, to cite Marie-Louise von Franz, 'is not at all an expression of personal wishes and goals, but is a neutral entity, psychic in nature, that exists in an absolutely transpersonal way' (von Franz, 1992: 231 cited by Mansfield, 2002: 123).

If the connection that links psychological states with events in the outer world is meaning, what is its nature? We may begin by noting that the meaning latent in a synchronistic event requires time, effort and contemplation in order to be consciously assimilated because, in this context, meaning is of a deep order connected with the unconscious. And the chief form of interaction between the conscious and unconscious is compensation, in which the unconscious psyche purposefully corrects the restricted perspective or even blindness of the ego (Mansfield, 2002, 125). For Jung, 'All psychological phenomena have some such sense of purpose inherent in them...' (1948b, 241). At the personal level that purpose is the furtherance of individuation – the coming to selfhood.

Jung argued that dreams and fantasies offer the individual unconscious compensation for imbalanced positions in which the ego is stuck. The more one-sided the conscious attitude, the more likely that vivid dreams with a strongly contrasting and purposive content will appear as an expression of the psyche's self-regulating function (*Ibid.*: 253). People who

pay attention to their own internal lives may recognise and respond to the correctives that they offer. Given that dreams have this potential, why do synchronistic experiences occur? Mansfield observes that such events are usually preceded by some activation and disturbance in the unconscious: they are more likely to occur in periods of deep difficulty and stress. Synchronicity may forcibly deliver an emotional and psychological awakening to the individual who has not responded at a deep level to less dramatic signals from the unconscious. It does so with the purpose of transforming that person through the process of individuation (2002: 126-9). The synchronistic event is the transforming agent. Mansfield adds that although positive experiences can also contribute to transformation, the suffering that human experience inevitably delivers is the surest point of access to change: ‘only when we are broken open, only when the ego is at least a little crushed, can the most powerful transforming experiences occur.’ (*Ibid.*: 135).

While personal transformation is what principally occupies Valentine, the narrative invites audiences to follow the Judge’s engagement with revelations of shared or transpersonal import. His experiences affirm that synchronicities may extend the register beyond that of the personal psyche by conveying numinous, prophetic messages, a discussion we shall develop later.

Since in the cinema the audience cannot stop the film and contemplate in full the as yet incompletely revealed personalities of *Red*’s protagonists, we cannot at this point make out what unconscious compensation may mean for them. It is already apparent from their behaviour patterns that compensation is occurring and matches Mansfield’s observation that the unconscious is not always encouraging (*Ibid.*: 126). Judge Kern’s persona is too darkly devoted to voyeurism for the synchronistic knowledge he presents to Valentine to be anything other than painful. He has been living in his own shadow. Like the priest in the vacant church, he is a counterfeit spirit, disguising an absence of connection behind the appearance of being in touch with all those around him – but espionage is not contact. And unlike Valentine, who has taken risks (for example, entering his house uninvited) he does not allow himself to be vulnerable – not, that is, until he waits by his radio receiver for her to enter his house again. By then allowing the intrusion of another person into his private domain, he opens himself up to the possibility of discovering his deeper self. We cannot individuate alone: the opus of the soul needs attachment and intimate connection to advance.

‘Know thyself’ is the philosophical axiom from which psychology was birthed, but it is only through revealing ourselves that we may heal. ‘Know thyself’ will be insufficient for a creative psychology. Not ‘Know thyself’ through reflection, but ‘Reveal thyself,’ which is the same as the commandment to love, since nowhere are we more revealed than in our loving. (Ortega y Gasset, 1957: 82-3)

Valentine and Joseph Kern do not lose contact. She reads a newspaper report of his trial and hastens one evening to his house fearing he might think that she had betrayed his grubby secret. The Judge assures her that he wrote his own confession in response to her wishes.<sup>3</sup> However, Valentine had asked him to do nothing more than stop spying. So he has over-compensated again, albeit this time making a conscious correction integral to his personality by surrendering to the Law. Although his confession moves his personal transformation onward, the Judge’s attempt at entering into relationship with Valentine is clumsy. Rather than consciously open himself by contacting her directly, he has calculated (correctly) that reports of his trial would bring her to him – behaviour which smacks of manipulation. Nevertheless, he reveals his backsliding and confesses his own want of probity. Then he challenges Valentine to do likewise and concede that, when previously she had spoken of pity for him, she truly meant that she felt disgust. She acknowledges the hit.

As they converse, Sobocinski’s camera tracks onto a billiard table laden with antiquated junk. While Kern’s house at large offers an emblem of his autumnal psyche pushing into old age, the long-abandoned table displays a particular feature of his inner turbidity. This is the decay of freshness (in contrast to the implications of Valentine’s billboard). According to Winnicott play is the hallmark of developing the ability to be relational; so the judge’s inability to play games, is an emblem for his aloneness and lack of relationship. Yet there is too something new in the house that signals rebirth. Rita has produced seven pups; and at Kern’s invitation Valentine stays for a while, enchanted by the little creatures. Clearly his heart too has been stirred by the arrival of the litter. Sensing this, she accepts warily his offer of a celebratory glass of pear brandy. Then shockingly, in another rude volte-face, the egregious old man promptly toasts neither the dogs nor her but himself.

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<sup>3</sup> The Judge’s betrayal of his neighbours’ privacy can be compared with the behaviour of three other characters (Valentine’s mother, Karin and his own former lover) all of whom cheat on other people.

Valentine has decided to travel to England. She makes it sound as though her plans are to leave forever, telling the Judge she feels she is abandoning her family. The exaggeration reveals that psychologically she has adopted the false posture of omnipotence to compensate for her inner powerlessness and guilt. Kern counters by shifting into a quasi-fatherly role (thereby substituting her absent parent). He advises (his words rising to her out of near total darkness in both the room and her own mind) that she must simply *be* and live out her own destiny rather than those of her brother and mother. In order to become herself – to individuate – she must discover a new level of psychological integration and maturity which shifts her from personal responsibility addressed during adolescence and young adulthood to a deeper connection to the Self which incorporates a personal ethics and depth integrity. That process involves differentiating between duty and obligation. The former is more externally focused and ruled by superego impositions of right and wrong. Obligation depends on an internally driven, self-reflective analytical position considering both the Other and the Self. It has a truly relational potential which holds the whole self and all ego states.

In parallel processes during this third encounter, the Judge and Valentine draw each other out from where they were previously stuck. As he turns on a lamp, it fails. The image blacks out, then blinds with excessive light before Kern shades the replacement bulb and restores *chiaroscuro*. The harsh visual oscillation encapsulates the emotional switchback through which their dialogue is pulling the unlikely pair. The topic of conversation switches to the role of judges when Kern reflects that one of his best decisions lay in acquitting a guilty man who subsequently made an honourable life for himself. Musing aloud about the nature of justice, Valentine discovers the thought that there is a vanity (a worldly futility) in attempting to determine what is and is not true. A person stays stuck individually and culturally when using only the concrete mind with reasoning determined exclusively by cause and effect. A higher mental functioning includes intuition, trusting the self, the source of Judge Kern's verdict in this instance. So Valentine's idea leads the old man toward a mode of understanding human kind that moves beyond the frames of reason and righteous morality. While he is impacting on her sense of self worth, she is rousing a more acute sense of personal ethics and value in him: each leads the other toward a spiritual awakening.

By chance Valentine has turned up on his birthday. Following their fruitful discussion, warmth has grown between them and she drinks to his health. In response, Kern celebrates her innocence. But no sooner have the words passed his lips than a stone shatters a window. Kern asks Valentine to add it to his collection of projectiles hurled at the house since the trial. Dropped into a pile, it cannot quite be the solitary philosopher's stone from which alchemists might make spiritual gold: in *Red*, both the characters and their society cannot scale the commanding heights of philosophy, so these are the stones of an imperfect moral philosopher. Kern keeps them as reminders that in his neighbours' place he would do the same, that were his circumstances those of the people he had adjudged guilty, he too would have stolen and killed. His ascetic amoralism compares with Valentine's innocence in that both positions are too one-sided, the former overwhelmed by shadow, the latter trying to exclude it. The synchronicity of the shattered window can be read as indicating (to refer back to Mansfield's observation) that something in each needs to be broken before transformation can take place.

Synchronicities have by this time begun with increasing emphasis to involve more characters. Auguste passes the final examination that admits him to practice as a Judge. He has been helped by revising the topic presented to him when his book fell open at the Place des Philosophes crossroads a few moments before Valentine's car hit Rita. She, of course, knows nothing of this, but later Judge Kern will recount a similar fortunate incident of *sortes Virgilianae* that occurred when he dropped a book decades earlier during his own preparation for his final legal exams.

Other incidents make for chance connections within the plot. For example, Karin celebrates Auguste's success by giving him a fountain pen exactly like the one that the Judge broke some nights earlier when writing his confession. This the latter had owned since taking up office: but now finally the phallus of Logos and the Law has failed him. Will the new pen have similar consequences for the young man? Indeed speculation about Auguste's future grows when the Judge's confession brings him and his neighbours to court. There, almost at the edge of the screen, Karin meets another young man (Paul Vermeulen). We cut hard to them shopping together for CDs at the very moment Valentine is sampling the Concert for the Unification of Europe on the next set of headphones. Although these coincidences do not have the characteristics of synchronistic events for the protagonists themselves, we experience the strangeness of these decreasingly random, but increasingly frequent and

purposeful connections as synchronistic. As yet, their meaning remains to be discerned; but periodically, by recalling generic musical devices from science fiction movies, Zbigniew Preisner's non-diegetic strings add to a sense that the material world conceals actualities deeper than can be seen on the surface – and that the surface is dissolving to reveal the potential of what lies hidden.

The most dramatic synchronicities link Judge Kern and Auguste, but these can only be appreciated after the younger man's love relationship collapses. Auguste and Karin had used the phone freely to utter intimacies that they could not say face-to-face – which is not true intimacy. This typifies the way that communications technologies are deployed in the trilogy. They change the nature of human connection – they extend the possibilities of reaching across time and space but also constrain the messages that can be sent. By abstracting one channel of communication from the others, they amplify its emotional tenor (whether positively or negatively) and thereby intensify whatever happens to be the current tenor of the characters' relationship, rather like the communication pattern between the conscious and unconscious. Now, however, Karin's phone is always engaged, denying all communication. In a frenzy of anxious suspicion amplified by her silence, Auguste hurls his jeep along the roads to her apartment. When he gets to her door he decides instinctively against knocking and scales risky exterior ledges to gain her window where he sees her in bed with her new lover. His action communicates the necessity of “risk taking” in individuation. To take the risk called for in the search for one's own truth is to be deeply committed to growth whereas fear suppresses it. Every painful encounter (especially if synchronistic) holds the possibility of further growth.

Karin's lie is the deeper betrayal than the deed itself. She violates true intimacy by not letting Auguste know *why* she has taken another lover. Her unwillingness to share what is in her mind hints at her distorted rationalisation that she is protecting him from the truth. Actually she is only protecting her own self-image – an indication of her psychological immaturity, her narcissism. The lie stops Auguste from moving forward and keeps him, as the victim of deception, living in a space of not knowing – a betrayal of the self. Although her leaving him in a more truthful manner would still feel like betrayal to Auguste, it would have provided him with an opportunity to learn more about the self, with his suffering holding transformative potential.

Like many newly betrayed lovers, Auguste suffers misery so boundless and irremediable that (if it cannot be turned outward in anger against the traitor) it must be answered with some self-humiliation. He follows Karin and her new lover to a restaurant, taps on the window to get her attention but hides when she comes out to speak to him. Then, as if replicating the damage done to his libido and willing his own animal warmth to die, he chains his beloved dog to a roadside post and abandons it.

While eavesdropping on Auguste's loving phone call to Karin, Judge Kern had said to Valentine that the weather reporter was not the right woman for him. Now we can see why. Although she is in her thirties, in developmental terms Karin behaves like an adolescent in hoping that she can get away with cheating. She lacks a sufficient sense of responsibility, unlike Valentine who has it to excess. Engulfed in her fantasies, her immature carelessness shows to the extreme in her final forecast. The Judge has inquired about the weather over the Channel in a week's time. He has divined that is when Valentine will board the ferry for England. Karin paints an idyllic picture, ignoring the storm clouds (both meteorological and metaphorical) gathering overhead. In her self-absorbed state of prolonged adolescence, the prospect she projects of sunny breezes completely ignores external reality and has everything to do with her idealisation of an escape across the same waters on her new lover's yacht. Unlike the Judge (when confessing to spying) she has not learnt to take responsibility for her actions.

Why does Judge Kern inquire about the weather when he expects Valentine to be on the ferry? It confirms his awareness that he has prophetic powers, but is wise enough to realise that such powers can be erratic when it comes to foretelling a specific incident. Marie-Louise von Franz argued that divination cannot foretell specifically what will happen. Rather, 'prediction only refers to the quality of the moment in which a synchronistic event might occur'; it might give a broad indication such as 'unexpected bad luck' (1969: 101). Only after events have been played out and his story is told in its entirety can we deduce that the Judge, contemplating the rejuvenating impact on his life of Valentine, must have fallen into a reverie reflecting on his own pursuit of a lost love. In summoning the past, he has divined the future – that a storm will endanger this young woman. It explains why he asks to see Valentine's ticket the night before she leaves – a request that would otherwise seem intrusive. He wants to be sure she *is* to sail on the day he anticipated because, relying on Karin's accuracy, he is confident that his foreboding was mistaken and that Valentine

will be safe if she travels then, but not if she goes at another time. Karin's carelessness has betrayed him (and perhaps herself too). As a diviner, Judge Kern is better attuned to the world than the personal weather reporter. He is transforming from *senex* into wise old man.

Before she leaves for England, Valentine invites the Judge to a fashion show in which she is modelling. On the runway she is at her most sure-footed, as beautiful as a goddess; but close-ups reveal her sadness when she cannot spot him in the crowd. However, Kern has watched the event from on high in the balcony – his lifelong custom in this theatre, and a reminder of his habitual elevated perspective on the human parade that came before him as a judge. Yet after the event, when she exits the dressing rooms on the catwalk and she has descended to the front stalls, she towers over him. As they shake hands warmly, he draws her down to squat cheerfully on the platform, so that she is not so far above him. Later, relinquishing her role as public performer and her image of perfection (as he in retiring had given up his public role), she steps down from the stage and stands beside him. As Jung wrote of individuation, 'Wholeness is not so much perfection as completeness' (1958: 239). Their movements enact growing mutual respect in which neither dominates the other. Their relationship contrasts with their previous lives. Kern (like Auguste) had placed a woman on a dais from which (like Karin) she inevitably fell, a calamity for the pedestal builder. Valentine has found awareness gradually dawning that, as Michel's jealously guarded love object, she has been held geographically and emotionally at a distance, a posture not too different from being on a plinth. As long as people idealise they do not have a real relationship with the other.<sup>4</sup>

The strangeness of the meeting in the theatre cannot be missed since Valentine herself speaks of it. The characters' solemn parting gives it the tone of a final farewell despite the fact that they also anticipate her return to Geneva after two weeks' absence. Their deep-felt sadness in saying good-bye reminds us that every new loss brings to mind all previous losses. So much past loss lies beneath a specific encounter in the present that it must be

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<sup>4</sup> As an example, when do parents become real to their children? The latter must break free from idealising, which should happen during adolescence in a good enough environment where they can separate from the parents in a healthy way. Trauma inhibits this process from occurring (as with Valentine and her brother finding out the secret about their mother and father). Only when the young shift from a dependent psychological position do they really start to see their parents as real people with strengths and weaknesses and their own histories.

excavated and connected to in order to develop a capacity to hold the suffering. Taking leave of someone in a manner that promotes personal growth entails completing the encounter by expressing to the other person who they have been and what they have meant.

Valentine has not mentioned that she will visit her boyfriend, possibly because, having tasted authenticity with Kern, she doubts the relationship with Michel. Instead she asks the Judge to enlarge on his dream of her as a middle aged woman waking happily alongside a man. He assures her that this prophecy will come true. His words are both a gift to her and the root of healing for his own wounded anima. Yet his prescience disconcerts her because she senses something important happening over which she has no control – fears that signal the kind of psychological disturbance which might precede synchronicity.

Comforted by Kern, she sets her fear to one side and (whereas he has intuited the future) makes his past her text. She breaks into it decisively, guided by empathy with his suffering. Threaded secretly behind her words, Preisner's delicately suspended strings (as during their previous meeting) subtly abstract the audience from any decreasingly relevant concern with the mundane and inculcate a readiness for further shifts in the orders of reality. Valentine's penetrating reading of Kern's sorrow shows that she has seen behind his persona no less surely than he through her disguises. Under her prompting, he fills out his story. Although the events he recounts precede Auguste by 35 years, the younger man's recent history has closely replicated them: the *sortes Virgilianae* with the dropped book; the love of a lissom blonde; her betrayal; and his spying on her. Although the parallels are not complete, the older man's subsequent lifetime of grief-locked rage, humiliation and espionage signals plainly the danger to which the younger man will be exposed if he does not resolve his anima obsession.

A storm interrupts the Judge's story and once again the smashing of a window breaks into their intimacy. Valentine battles to secure the wind- and rain-lashed French doors and the curtains wrap her ominously as if in a shroud. Kern looks on, the anxiety this sign triggers augmented when he perceives that she was expecting this storm. Has she heard a forecast that contradicts Karin's blithe prediction of calm? The harsh weather both intensifies and acts out the protagonists' states of mind fittingly since the words for wind and spirit (as with the Greek *pneuma*) are closely aligned in many languages (Jung, 1934: 345). Here the Judge, revisiting acute past agony and conscious that Valentine's empathy makes it safe for

him to do so, experiences the rushing wind of the spirit breaking open the ego (Mansfield, 2002: 135). He wonders whether Valentine may not be the woman whom, after the disaster with his first love, he never met. Beyond question, their emotional and spiritual affinity empowers her to steer him toward further transformation.

Indeed, like a healer, Valentine perceives that Kern has more to confess. It concerns Hugo Holbling, the rival whom the Judge saw as having stolen his only love. Many years later, this person was arraigned before him, charged with the death of several people in a building's collapse. Kern ought ethically to have declined hearing the case but could not resist exercising power over the man he still considered his enemy. Although Holbling's guilt was not in question and Kern delivered the correct verdict, he had exploited his office for the secret satisfaction of extracting revenge. Behind the obvious moral issue (which his immediate retirement did not extinguish) The Judge's confession reveals the extent to which inability to process his archaic grief had exposed him to the shadow archetype.

The trauma suffered in the betrayal of love brought about a splitting of Kern from his shadow. As Jung said of this phenomenon, 'The tendency to split means that parts of the psyche detach themselves from consciousness to such an extent that they not only appear foreign but lead an autonomous life of their own' (1942: 121). All those years fused in frozen rage he has been unaware of projecting self-loathing onto his enemy. As complexes do, in Kern's imaginal world his former rival has taken on the autonomous behaviour patterns of a seemingly independent being (*Ibid.*). In its obsessive quality, his spying on the neighbours arose from the Judge's need to fill a painful lack – to reunite with the split-off shadow that he had displaced onto Holbling.

As Kern confesses to the cold, self-seeking calculation that lay behind his final case, his account is interrupted by the theatre's gruff janitor. Somewhat irritably the tired functionary is searching for the cleaner so that he can lock the building. But when he finds her, he ceases grumbling and insists that she hand him her buckets because they are heavy. His generous stance is, from a psychoanalytic perspective, relational. It reveals his lack of unhealthy narcissism. Had it been otherwise, rather than wishing to help share the burden (a relational stance), the janitor would have insisted on his own agenda, namely to get away home. As played out here, however, his role in cleaning up garbage is analogous to the

necessity, if an individual is to be complete (as opposed to perfect), to gather and connect with the contents of his or her own shadow.

Valentine, despite the glamorous persona she adopts as a model, also has a humble capacity for relation. One further incident, this one relating to a scenario that recurs in each part of the trilogy, confirms it. Julie and Karol in Paris and Valentine in Geneva each see a bent ancient struggling to push a bottle into a recycling bank (a repeated scene so unusual that it seems in deceitful memory as though it must be the same individual in the same city).<sup>5</sup> Only the last person receives help – from Valentine – just as, undeterred by old age or his bitter humour, she risks her peace of mind to help Judge Kern. Indeed, it is because of the comfort Valentine gives Kern, that his shadow releases its deepest obscurities. Their last moments together present evidence of his inner growth. Valentine offers to have her brother take him her unwanted television set and the Judge replies that he looks forward to knowing him. He could never have welcomed meeting a heroin user without advancing in self-knowledge.

In due time, Valentine boards the ferry for England. So does Auguste, who has recovered from his trauma to the extent that he has reclaimed his dog. But scarcely has the ship left port than it capsizes in the storm, and almost 1500 people perish. We take up the Judge's point of view as, aghast, he devours televised news footage.<sup>6</sup> Immediately we find it impossible to deny a thought triggered by the first report of two people who have drowned after their yacht capsized that they might be Karin and her new lover. Our making this statistically improbable connection confirms that the film has drawn us into its synchronistic structure. Soon the transmission freezes close ups of the few survivors as they are brought ashore. The reporter identifies Auguste as one of only two Swiss citizens to have been found alive; and then, cold and exhausted, Valentine steps onto dry land. When her eyes lock with Auguste's we see (aided by the Judge's precognition) that surviving the horror will throw them together – and that they are right for each other.

Having watched the coverage, the old man looks out from his window and, for the first time in decades, grief pushes through his defences as he weeps healing tears. Given what we now

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<sup>5</sup> The recurrence of this motif across the trilogy draws the spectator's attention, endowing the action with significance. In the recycling process, old bottles become the source of something fresh and new – perhaps a metaphor for the fragility of human life or the psyche's transformation at its end.

<sup>6</sup> Valentine's brother must already have visited him.

know about him, his tears signify not only his joy at Valentine's survival, but also relief at the playing out of his prevision. No less important is the confirmation for his spirit that his anima has not perished after its lovely re-illumination.

The final shot, a freeze frame, pointedly mirrors Valentine's image in the advertisement and therefore reverberates with complexity. Auguste had found her image striking when seen on that enormous billboard where it undulated in the breeze, giving the illusion of life. By the time of the disaster, it has been imprinted on his mind for some while. As they disembark from the rescue launch, its replication before his eyes implies that he has found the woman whom he has, without knowing it, been waiting for – the woman on whom to project positive attributes of his anima in what will become a love relationship.

Valentine is not interviewed in the television coverage, but she has survived disaster, seen many die and faced real terror brought on by the impersonal forces of a destiny that she has no power to challenge. These experiences can only have diminished her omnipotence fantasies. When her rage exploded at the drug dealer, her over-weighted omnipotence was produced by the powerlessness she could not acknowledge. In this calamity she has found strength enough only to save her own life and cannot deny her helplessness in the face of the storm. Thus the integration of her shadow is tactfully signalled.

The conclusion of *Red* goes beyond the personal transformation of the protagonists to draw attention to the cultural and archetypal spheres. When Judge Kern was driving to Valentine's fashion show he passed her advertisement on the Place des Philosophes. At last its legend is revealed: 'En toute circonstance: Fraîcheur de vivre'. 'Fraîcheur' has several connotations and refers equally to a blooming complexion, the blossoming of a flower and freshness of spirit. An ad for bubble gum offers the consumer nothing less than transformation! In part, indeed, the advert attracts through this bogus implication that chewing gum will transform the purchaser narcissistically into a cynosure of youthful beauty like the young model. In part it achieves potency through the glamour of the image as opposed to the product (the agency rejected the shot where Valentine blew a pink bubble). Several factors endow the poster with this glamour: the size of the billboard; the suffusion of scarlet to an intensity not found in nature; the beauty and youth of the woman; and the artful disarray of her hair that speaks (as does her expression) of life lived to the full but still within control. Paradox lies latent here in that, to gain the effect of living life to the

full, the photographer asked Valentine to think of something terrible as he took this still. Thus two countercultural readings of the advert would be, first, that a little terror creates stimulation; and, second, that there is nothing to fear except not feeling one's aliveness through the fraîcheur that bubble gum excites. These readings converge in that (like so many advertisements) both invite the consumer to a constant and ultimately unhealthy need for stimuli experienced as an end in their own right rather than as the trigger for passionate action. Meanwhile the hoarding's location presents us with a culture in which philosophers have been sidelined by the commercial imperative.

This image so engaged actual audiences that, cropped to frame only Valentine's profile, it became the icon fronting the marketing campaign for *Red*, featuring on posters, DVDs and videotapes – where meanings available to those who had yet to see the film bore no reference to gum but focussed on imperilled, youthful beauty. Within the film's narrative, however, the giant poster focuses the tension between celebration of Valentine's youthful beauty and the cultural abjection of emotive appeals to puerile commercial values.

After the denouement, the audience cannot but look back in time and recognise that the poster (in an *enantiodromia* or reversal of opposed values) has by negative implication predicted the terror. It is the film's most disturbing evocation of precognition. However, although the final televised freeze frame strikingly resembles the advert, it is not an exact replica. The billboard no longer exists because, when the storm worsened, workmen took it down. While, intercut against the ferry putting to sea the men lower the image, Valentine's face buckles and sags as if waves were washing over her – another synchronicitous forewarning. It warns not of her death but the collapse of her old self. The final televised frame (a minute, low resolution image compared with the hoarding) starts as a two shot with Auguste until we zoom in on Valentine; salt water has soaked the dishevelled woman; shock has dropped her jaw; a coarse first-aid blanket replaces a stylish wrap in the original photograph; and the background is the matt and scuffed red of a rescuer's jacket, not the ad's vibrant scarlet.

Not for the first time (an earlier instance being the accident where Rita bleeds), Kieslowski has extended traditional readings of redness to distinguish between the brilliant scarlet that technology can produce and less glamorous reds. The former, highly saturated and pure colour (which imbues not only advertisements but also lights, furniture, vehicles and

clothing) *can* convey traditional values. However, it may also reflect a hyped register that not only goes beyond actual human experience (of itself an entirely appropriate means of engaging with the archetypal) but tends to a one-sidedness in which endlessly, greedily to desire becomes the goal rather than the means to knowledge of the world and self. Less glamorous reds, by contrast, never exceed the archetypal values associated with the colour in older traditions of Western culture.

Blind chance recurs dramatically in the final sequence in that Julie and Olivier, the lead protagonists in *Blue*, are numbered among the handful of survivors together with Karol and Dominique from *White*. Through their presence, the three films converge so unexpectedly as to require audiences to account for the connections between them. The shock of this last-minute entwining of the main characters' fates directs our attention back to the other carefully rendered links between the parts of the trilogy. Those links (as in the bottle bank scenes) may at first sight be deceptive in implying connections in time and space. However, careful scrutiny dissolves any such notion and the impossibility in most cases of a causal connection invites spectators to cogitate on the true underlying meaning of these moments. In terms of the emotional impact relating to the three couples, one thematic implication is that to find real love individuals must be survivors of their own personal storms.

The conclusion of *Red* invites us to recognise but then look beyond the personal dimension. The wreck featured in the final sequences had actually occurred some years earlier, a fact that intensifies our need to explore chance connections. Although the crew's failure to close the bow doors (which caused the *Herald of Free Enterprise* to capsize in 1987) is only hinted at in *Red*, and the numbers actually drowned were fewer, most Europeans would not have failed in 1994 to feel the closeness of recent history. In the film, the impersonal forces of nature govern the fates of *Red's* main characters; by extension to the other principal protagonists, those forces become transpersonal in the trilogy's conclusion.

Spectators who have empathised with the suffering and joys of the main characters in *Red* will be aware that the process of being drawn through the ingeniously dovetailed narrative also creates a vicarious form of stress in us. We are being played through the flux and rupture of emotionally charged cinematic time which, for any spectator engaged in a film, is by definition imaginal time. Conditions in these three psychological narratives are, then, ripe for the audience to experience virtual synchronicity.

Among the characteristics that Vic Mansfield identified in describing transformative self-knowledge experienced through synchronicity, some, duly adapted to take account of the moviegoer's vicarious engagement, help us understand the level of experience that *Red* opens to those spectators who do indeed register its synchronicity. Firstly, such experiences always involve an inner intuition that the events are meaningful, albeit the articulation of meaning may take much time and effort (Mansfield, 2002: 133). Not all audience members will have such an intuition – only those who, at a puzzling, deep level, experience blind chance as meaningful in *Red*. Secondly, the experience of synchronicity is always arresting and numinous – and therefore has the potential to bring sacred knowledge. This may be of a cosmic nature; it may be teleological in expressing the compensatory function of the unconscious; and it may bring holistic knowledge by giving us a personal expression of the unity underlying soul and matter (*Ibid.*: 133-5). As mentioned earlier, the impersonal forces of nature govern the fates of *Red*'s main characters. When the principal figures from the trilogy's other films are involved in the wreck, the transpersonal dimension cannot be missed. If deeply moved, we have the opportunity to perceive an underlying unity: the ordering of life seems on the surface random, but those who attend well cannot miss revelations of the numinous.

As *Red* reminds us, with its relentless juxtaposition of the wonderful against the tawdry, numinous revelations may be positive in the affirmation of life and the glories of human culture that celebrate it, but they may also be hideously negative. This is true when human artistry elevates something so vacuous as bubble gum into a cultural object of spuriously high significance. It constitutes a psychological betrayal (through a carelessness of the psyche, a lack of consciousness) the endless repetition of which through the insistent pressure of universal advertising clogs the inner growth not only of individuals but also whole societies. The psychological carelessness inculcated by the advertising industry in *Red* bears a share of responsibility for the culture's developmental and spiritual immaturity.

A comparable human carelessness contributes to the shipwreck. Where indifferent human labour is overturned and punished by storm, the forces in play are so dramatic that they can be recognised as having a cosmic, transpersonal quality. In that wider context, a symbolic reading touching on the condition of the European psyche can be offered. The ferry should have carried its human cargo between one land mass and another. Its movement can be

interpreted as a journey from one state of consciousness to another (as it should prove, whether they know it or not, for the couples from all three films). However, in this symbolic paradigm, the sea, as one of the most common symbols of the unconscious and emotional life, cannot be ignored when almost 1,500 people drown. The transpersonal significance of the disaster arises therefore from all these souls having been sucked into the ocean. Powerless to break free of the sinking vessel and swim to the nearby shore, the great mass of passengers seems, reckoning their fate symbolically, to have been wholly unprepared for an encounter with the unconscious.

Extending our reading in the collective register, how can we understand the synchronicity of our six protagonists all surviving this horrendous and yet numinous catastrophe? Inevitably their continued existence reverberates with echoes of their own stories. Julie and Olivier have not only been liberated from grief through their love and music. They have also completed composing music commenced by the dead – its purpose to celebrate the uniting of Europe and touch the political psyche of the continent. Success in his personal affairs has enabled Karol to move on from what had in its moment been an empowering transformation into an entrepreneur. Now he has put aside his passion for money. Given that Dominique's double incarceration in both her own cruelty and jail was due in part to his own lack of psychological development, freeing her and renewing their union demonstrates also his own growth to the point at which he knows how to compromise from a position of inner strength. Implicit in their rapprochement is the anticipated remarriage of Poland to its continental neighbours as accession to the European Union approached. Yet the wreck of the ferry implies, as indicated earlier, the perilous uncertainty of human affairs (political as well as personal), as the warfaring history of Europe over the centuries has demonstrated time and again. When people go to war, the conscious and the unconscious are far from being in relationship – be the battle personal and concern a couple such as Dominique and Karol, or collective and have to do with the overwhelming of nations (so often Poland's terrible fate).

Perhaps it is no accident that the trilogy concludes with the anticipated happiness of a Swiss couple – their nation one of the very few in Europe to have a fine record of neutrality in times of war. Like the other survivors, Valentine and Auguste have also suffered through difficult relationships; now as the vectors of their stories converge, we cannot doubt they will become lovers. Thus what their story might mean for collective humanity registers in

terms of what can be taken from disaster. The psychological shipwreck that all six characters have in their various ways endured has brought about a measure of transformation in their lives. All have been steeped in the unconscious by the pain they have had to undergo. That in turn has endowed them (neutralising their complexes and bringing the unconscious conscious) with the potential not only to love, but also to gain deeper understanding of their own spiritual natures. Therein lies the symbolic justification for their survival. Whereas greed stimulated by commerce leads to a ceaseless appetite for empty possession, these lovers have acquired something infinitely more valuable, a sense of belonging to each other. The numinous significance of their survival is transpersonal in that they are simply fulfilling their destinies.

*Red* ends with the distinctive engine note of a light aircraft passing over the Judge's house as we watch his tears of joy and the final freeze frame of his rescued protégée. The noise that occasionally intervened when he and Valentine were conversing, it hints tactfully at the self-transformation that follows suffering.

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